Starting with our next issue, January 1983, which begins our 31st year of publication, we will take up a new theme for our lead article, and it will run for two years. We believe the subject *A Christian Worldview* will interest you and it will present material that you may not have seriously considered. I will write this series out of a sense of urgency, for I am deeply concerned over some of the large issues facing the world, our nation, and our churches. I will begin with an essay on the creator God.

We are pleased that Carl Ketcherside will present a series on *Renewal through Recovery* during the next year.

Ouida says that hundreds of you are due to renew your subscription this month. We always run short on January issues because so many are slow in renewing, and when they do they request back issues. If you will take the time to renew *now*, it will help us all. And remember you can send four or more other names along with yours, new subscribers along with your renewal, for only 3.00 per name. That helps us to do more good. Many of our most appreciative readers were introduced to the journal in this way.

If you will send us a check for 21.95, we will put a copy of *The Stone-Campbell Movement: An Anecdotal History of Three Churches* by Leroy Garrett in the mail to you the same day. The response thus far to the book has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic, and we believe you too will appreciate it.

When you move it is imperative that you send us *both* your old and new addresses.

Since it is renewal time for many of you, please let us know if money is a consideration. We will keep you on our list and you can pay later or never. We do not want any one to drop out because of money, for we are not doing this for money. Ask Ouida!

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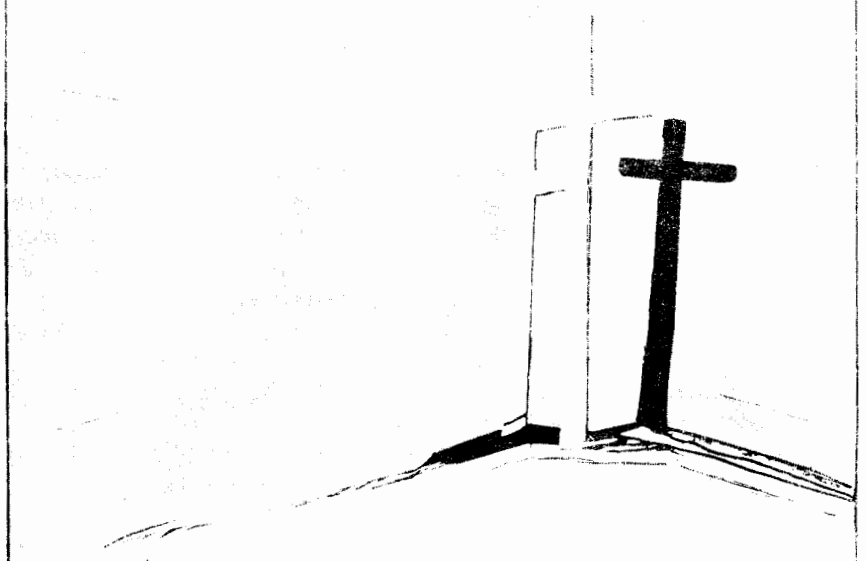
RESTORATION REVIEW



A Martyr's Prayer

Now may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. —Rom. 15:13

(See page 384)

Vol. 24, No. 10 Leroy Garrett, Editor December 1982

Jesus Today . . .

JESUS AND THE WORLD

I have overcome the world. — Jn. 16:33

That our Lord would make such a statement as this in the very face of the cross can but stagger the mind of man. He is soon to be arrested and tried as a criminal. He is to die as a brigand, with none of the usual things that mark one's life as even moderately successful. He was apparently penniless and upon his arrest his closest friends deserted him. And yet he says *I have overcome the world.*

It was the climatic statement of a weighty admonition: "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Malcolm Muggeridge, that salty old British cynic that became a Christian to the surprise of all his countrymen, pointed to this passage as the one that turned his life around. It was Muggeridge who became so digusted with the false values of the college where he served that he resigned in protest, charging that all the students cared for was "booze and bed." The world is both deceived and deceiving, he said, and what impressed him about Jesus was that he refused to let the world sell him a bill of goods. He overcame the world by not allowing the world to deceive him.

Jesus' realism also impressed Muggeridge. The world is laden with troubles, Jesus is saying, and just as sure as you are in the world it is just that sure that you will have troubles. Whether diseases, tragedies, persecutions, heartaches, the troubles are there, for that is the way the world is. But that is OK; be of good cheer. *I have overcome the world!* Even in the face of the cross he had overcome, so there is cause only for joy, not despair. Muggeridge saw that this is what he had been looking for in this superficial world. He became a Christian, a follower of him who could speak of joy in the face of death and of victory in the face of a cruel cross.

One respected New Testament scholar has suggested that oftentimes when Jesus refers to "the world" he has reference to the Pharisees or to the Jewish ecclesiastical structure. He points out that this is what *kosmos* (world) means in the Greek, *arrangement* or *structure.* So when Jesus says to his own brothers who did not believe on him, "The world cannot hate you; but it hates me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil," he is not referring to the rank and file masses but to the Jewish system. After all, Jesus did not cry out against the world generally but against *the System.* It was the System that hated him and finally destroyed him. And

when he says "I am not of the world" he was referring to the difference between himself and the ecclesiasticism of his day, not to the social order generally.

This being the case , when he said "I have overcome the world," he meant he had gained victory over the System that had well nigh destroyed the Jewish faith.

Whatever merits this interpretation has, it is evident that in many instances when Jesus talks about "the world" he is referring not to Pharisaism only but to the kind of world we all live in, the "order" over which Satan rules as "the prince of this world." When he says "In the world you will have troubles," he was referring to a world of drugs, crime, divorce, unemployment, abortion, inflation, as well as religious oppression. And when he said "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul" he was referring to all the allurements within our way of life, whether pleasure, things, fame, or fortune.

But when our Lord "came into this world" his confrontation was with the Pharisees, for they epitomized the values of "the world order" that sought to control the human spirit that the Father had made free. This is what Satan as the god of this world seeks to do, control man's spirit and body. This is what the Pharisees were doing, as Jesus indicated: "You travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves." They sought *control* over the people while Jesus was out to liberate them, thus the confrontation. But it was in essence a confrontation with the world, the system, "the order" that by its very nature stands opposed to God, who created mankind to be free.

This is what our world seeks to do to us, *control* every aspect of our lives, whether it be the way we think, the way we spend our money, or what we do with our spare time. The media, the government, the churches, the schools, the advertisers, and all the "experts" seek to determine our values and manage our lives. And there are many people, perhaps the majority, who are willing for others to do their thinking for them and to set their values and standards.

This is what it means to be "worldly" or "carnal" — captured by the values of "the System" and addicted by its allurements, which Jesus described as "choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life." The man "of this world" is not the one who enjoys a glass of wine, but the one who has "drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality" and has "become rich by the wealth of her sensuality." To be "worldly" is to be in a Babylonian captivity, *captured* by the world, its philosophies and its values.

This is what Muggeridge saw, even at an educational institution where booze and bed were more important than learning. He came to write about

our "confetti world," a world made unreal by all our game-playing and self-deception, a world that anesthetizes us against reality.

So when Jesus said "I have overcome the world" he was saying that the world did not and could not control him. While the world is powerfully deceitful with its false values, Jesus was not deceived in that he would not buy the bill of goods that the world offered. The world presumed to have the upperhand in that it nailed him to a cross, but God turned its cruelty into mankind's most glorious hour. In death there was victory, for God went on through the resurrection to make Jesus both Lord and Christ.

Our Lord was thus a free man of God even on the cross. It was his tormentors who were in bondage, for they allowed the obstructions of "the System" to keep them from seeing the Prince of Peace and the Lord of Glory. The Scriptures assure us that "it was because of ignorance that you did it," but it was willful ignorance, which may be the greatest obstruction to freedom of all. Alas for the malady of not wanting to know! "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks!," Jesus warns, and we have those stumbling blocks all around us. We certainly are not immune to them because we are in the church.

The beauty of it all is that in any event, let come what may, *we have the victory.* Even in this world the victory is ours, for our Lord was victorious even in the world. So long as we are not *of* this world, deceived by its confetti, we have the victory and we can be of good cheer. Jesus faced even the cross with good cheer because of "the joy set before him." He was a man with a destiny. He knew where he was going. In his high priestly prayer in Jn. 17 the Lord prayed to the Father "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do" and went on to say "But now I come to Thee." He was of good cheer because he had his values straight.

Fifteen times he refers to the world in that prayer in a way that shows he controlled it and that it did not control him. He was rather controlled by the Spirit within him. That too is our victory — *the Editor*

A MARTYR'S PRAYER: THEN AND NOW

Now may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. — Ro. 15:13

This beautiful prayer has in it the power to change one's life. Its key ideas are the essence of the Christian faith: *faith, hope, joy, peace, power.* Take any one of these away and Christianity is compromised. Only in this

passage are these attributes structured to the superlatives of our religion. God is the God of hope, not only the creator and judge. Faith is that trust that cultivates joy and peace. The power is the power of the Holy Spirit within us, and so we not only have hope but we *abound* in hope.

For sometime this great prayer from the apostle has been especially meaningful to me, as if it were the quintessence of what it means to be a Christian. On one recent Sunday morning when Ouida and I were driving to the assembly, we allowed this majestic passage to play across our minds, memorizing it and repeating it to each other, and planting it deeply in our minds. We were impressed that to Paul the Father in heaven is the God of hope, and we wondered if the church has yet caught the vision of abounding in hope by the power of the Holy Spirt. *What do we really know about the power of the Spirit*?, we asked ourselves. We were persuaded that this is one of the great prayers in the history of the church.

About that same time in Zambia, Africa a terrible tragedy was taking place. A dear sister, Elaine Brittell, a missionary to that country for 36 years was stabbed to death as she lay sleeping alone in her quarters, only a few hours before she would have once again assembled with the saints at the Church of Christ mission, which she had done each Lord's day since she went to Africa with her parents back in 1946. She was 60 years old. When one of the brothers called early that Sunday to bear her to the assembly, she did not make the usual response. Instead of seeing her radiant face, aglow with the Spirit, he found her bloody corpse. After stapping her several times, the murderer left his knife buried in her throat.

Elaine was one who worked quietly behind the scenes, doing all those things that must be done at a mission station. In recent years she had been working in the translation and printing operation of the mission in Livingstone, a city named for the great missionary. For 36 years she hung in, denying herself of what might have been hers in her native America. At last she died a martyr's death. When Ouida and I read the news, she asked me if martyrs would have a special place in heaven. I told her that I understand the Scriptures to teach this.

Some days before her death Elaine sent what proved to be the last of her many reports to the Churches of Christ back home, the churches of the premillennial persuasion, that supported her. She wrote like one animated by that special Guest from heaven, who bears the fruit of love, joy, and peace in our hearts. She began by saying:

"This is such a beautiful day which the Lord has given us. Also He has given this quiet time to sit down and finally let you know you are often in our prayers and thoughts as we go about our daily tasks. Praise God, He hears every whispered prayer and gladly begins to answer it according ot His good will. Thanks be to God for His great love and kindness day by day, hour by hour and minute by minute!"

She goes on in her report to tell the American churches what was going on in the mission. Their ministry among prisoners was bearing fruit. "Many have accepted the message of Christ and asked to be baptized into the family of God," she wrote, and went on to tell how the prison officials allowed them to bring in an extra large bathtub for the immersions. She rejoiced that more of the brethren were volunteering for prison work, and that already some 60 ex-prisoners, who became believers while incarcerated, were witnessing for Christ in their communities.

Elaine went on to describe how the new African brethren long for reading material, anything about God and his word. "My thanks to you," she said, "who have sent Christian books, tracts, pencils, Bible courses, Bibles, clothing and gifts to share with many seeking souls." She added that the prayers of those back home "have strengthened us day by day to continue to serve in His harvest field with renewed joy."

She went on to write of the New Chitonga Bible translation work that hopes to have the complete New Testament by mid-1983 and of the Zambia Bible Training Center. She was obviously very much alive in body and spirit, and rejoicing that her eyesight was holding up.

She closed her report with a prayer, Ro. 15:13: "Now may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

As in the case of the apostle, it proved to be a martyr's prayer for the Church of Christ upon earth.

I have no satisfactory answer (*theodicy* the theologians call it) as to why God allows such things to happen to his beloved children. Yes, of course, he could have hindered the murderer in his evil pursuit of dear Elaine and spared her for many more years of devoted service. We know the Father does sometimes do just that, but in Elaine's case he did not. He often has not. John the Baptist and the apostle Paul were beheaded when they still had years of service in them. Even young Christians, committed and capable, are taken from us long before they reach their potential for doing good. And sometimes, as in Elaine's case, their fate is so horrible that we cringe even at the thought of it. I certainly would have attempted to protect Elaine had I been there that night. God was there and he certainly could have protected her, but he did not. Perhaps he did protect her from such tragedy many times before, but not this time. And who are we to question the God of heaven? As Paul put it in Ro. 9:14: "What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!"

We see through a glass darkly. Once we are able to view things in the light of eternity the skewed things of earth will look different to us. What is tragic in time may not be in eternity. I can believe that faithful Elaine has no complaint to file with the Father as to why he allowed her to die so ignominiously. She understands, and it is all right. That is the believer's only answer to our kind of world. Whatever happens to us, it is all right. God will see to it, now and forever, that it is all right.

The crux of it all is in that prayer from the martyred apostle, passed along to us from the martyred Elaine Brittell. "May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing. . ." Ah, if we really believed, what a difference it would make! The difference is a life of joy and peace, even amidst tragedy.

". . .that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." This is our strength and this is our victory, even when we are drenched with our own blood, dying a martyr's death. Ah, this is our strength and victory *especially* when we die a martyr's death. — *the Editor*

WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR CHURCHES OF CHRIST?

Jimmie Lovell, editor of *Action* in California who is now well into his 80's, has more right than most of us to speak of his concern for the present plight of Churches of Christ. No one among us has made a greater commitment to programs of Churches of Christ than he, especially in the area of foreign missions. For decades he has been a veritable one-man missionary society, gathering and dispersing millions of dollars and doing it well.

He is now so concerned about the Churches of Christ "dying on the vine" that he is advocating a kind of "summit" meeting in an effort to ascertain what has gone wrong. In a letter "To some of my brothers in Christ," which includes me, with an attending note that I pass my copy on to Carl Ketcherside, he quotes from both the living and the dead among Church of Christ leaders to the effect that "There is much evidence today that the church is falling apart."

That quotation, coming from J.M. Powell, would in itself be sufficiently disquieting if true, but one must realize that brother Powell is not referring to what this journal would call "the catholic church of Jesus Christ upon earth," which embraces all those around the world who make up the Body of Christ, but to a particular few within that Body known as "Churches of Christ," who are concentrated primarily in the Bible belt of the American south. *That* church, the universal church of God, is *not* falling apart, and it will never fall apart, or "the gates of hades shall never prevail against it," as its Head once put it. In fact this is a great era of

renewal for the church, and futurists are now saying that the church's gains in Africa and India mean that those nations will one day be the greatest Christian nations of the world.

But brother Lovell is understandably worried about what he calls the Church of Christ, and we share that concern. His list of "major problems" could be summarized as:

1. *A lack of concern for world evangelism.* In his November *Action* brother Lovell notes that in 1974 we had 724 missionaries overseas. Today there are 427.

2. *A steady shrinkage of membership.* He thinks that maybe as many as thousands of churches have ceased to exist, and that the overall membership has declined by one or two million in recent years. A better explanation of the new figures that have come from recent research is that the membership of Churches of Christ has always been inflated.

Brother Lovell estimates that we may lose at least one of every two that we baptize.

3. *Preaching is becoming more and more a profession.* "Money plays a major role," he says in the letter, and in his journal he opines that preachers might one day be unionized. They concentrate where the money is, he notes.

4. *Divisions within Churches of Christ.* Brother Lovell calls it "Mutilation of the body of Christ," and he notes that not one major wound has ever been healed.

5. *There is a leadership crisis.* He calls the late Batsell Baxter to witness that we have a leadership crisis, and he sees Reuel Lemmons, editor of the *Firm Foundation,* as the only one at "the top level" who makes known "our various and harmful conditions" and who suggests ways of righting them.

So, brother Lovell calls for summit gatherings, first a small one to set the tone and then a larger one, the purpose of which is to "save" the church from its downward direction. He wants us to take a close look at the "beautiful ongoings" and "the weak spots" alike in hopes of turning things around. "I have no intention of riding anything very long headed downward," he says in the letter, which sounds ominous coming from Jimmie Lovell, the eternal optimist.

While it is unlikely that I could be of much help at such a summit gathering, and even more unlikely that I would be invited in the first place, I will accept brother Lovell's invitation to offer suggestions and criticisms. He wants to pass them along in a kind of "think tank" operation.

First, we need to realize that the church catholic does not need to be saved. It is already saved. It does not need any saviors. It already has a Savior. It is not sick and it is not about to die, and it is not necessarily on a downward trend. It does not necessarily have the problems listed above,

even if it is always in need of reform, until it becomes the church triumphant in heaven.

Second, I have no interest in saving a sect, and it just may be that this is what brother Lovell is talking about, if indeed he is able to consider such a possibility. There was once a small summit of our pioneers known as the Springfield Presbytery. Like brother Lovell, they were concerned for the unity of the church. They drew up "The Last Will and Testament" for the "body" they had created, in which they said: "Let this body die and sink into union with the body of Christ at large, for there is but one body and one Spirit." Let there be a summit of our leaders in which we declare "Let the 'Church of Christ' die and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large." By this we would mean that we will henceforth count all other believers in Christ as our equals and will not longer make our opinions and unique practices (such as acappella music) a test of fellowship.

Third, while I appreciate my brother's concern that we have a "Think tank," especially since our folk do such little real thinking in or out of tanks, I am persuaded that we must first learn how to be together and to pray together. Without confrontation! So let there be a larger summit to which we invite our people from Christian Churches and Disciples of Christ (perhaps still others at future summits, but let the first one be those of our own heritage), and let us *be together* in prayer and fellowship.

At this summit we might listen to some of the more renowned leaders of each of the three groups, but let us have one condition, one ruled by love: *this time we meet to recognize how much we have in common and not to discuss differences.* We can meet in small groups to pray and discuss our common problems, and then assemble to hear great preaching from *all* our people. But most of all we will learn to be with each other and to pray, *together.* In doing this we will be pleasing our heavenly Father, for that is what Jesus did. He prayed for the unity of all believers.

Fourth, the crisis for the Church of Christ just now is not that it *grow,* at home and abroad, which is brother Lovell's chief concern, but that it cease being a sect, or that it overcome its sectarian tendencies, which Reuel Lemmons seems to concede, with brother Lovell's appreciation. If brother Lemmons is about the only answer to our leadership crisis, as Jimmie seems to think, then let us look to him to point the way to our becoming a more loving and accepting people and thus repudiate the myth that we are the only Christians.

Let brother Lemmons take the lead by stating explicitly that while we have the right to be non-instrumental music, we do not have the right to reject our brothers who use the instrument.

Let him take the lead in resounding the plea of our pioneers, which is the basis of our heritage, that we can all unite on the basis of loyalty to Jesus Christ, and that we not make our opinions a test of fellowship,

whether these be millennial theories, Sunday Schools, Herald of Truth, instrumental music, missionary societies, methods of serving Communion, tongue-speaking, the divorce problem, theories of inspiration, etc., etc.

Let brother Lemmons show us that we can differ on such matters as these and accept each other as brothers in Christ, that congregations can differ on such matters and still do some things together, such as feeding the poor of the world and evangelizing the lost. We can always have a "think tank" around in which differences are discussed in a spirit of loving forbearance, but always *within* the fellowship, not as a condition to fellowship.

Finally, I would suggest to brother Lovell that there is already more "turning around" than he realizes. It may not be in the direction that he has in mind! For instance, I would rather have fewer missionaries abroad who preach Jesus Christ and the grace of God and who cooperate with other churches in reaching the lost than to have the number brother Lovell wants, who preach the "Church of Christ" and who number other Christian missionaries as among the lost and compete with them rather than cooperate with them.

We have a growing number among Churches of Christ who, like Thomas Campbell, are sick and tired of the janglings and jarrings of our sectarian strife. They are the real heroes, not our editors, and they are the ones who will make us a freer, less sectarian, more responsible, more spiritual, more accepting people — down the road in a brighter tomorrow.

And, Jimmie, they are already having their summits, each one with the Lord, which may be the only summit any of us need. — *the Editor*

A LETTER TO A FELLOW EDITOR

(The following letter to Dr. Thomas Warren, editor of *The Spiritual Sword,* is self-explanatory. — *Ed.*)

10 November 1982

Dear Dr. Warren:

I just had an odd experience in reading your October issue of *The Spiritual Sword*, so I thought I would tell you about it. Since I too am very concerned about the current onslaught of secularistic humanism, I had more than common interest in your editorials. I was agreeing with you all the way, so you can appreciate how surprised I was when I reached your third editorial and found myself named among the bad guys! Already I was

in agreement with your thesis, *There are at least some things about which one must be right!*, and yet I found myself, along with Carl Ketcherside, named as one who does not believe this. In fact I am sure that Carl and I both would go beyond that and say there are *many* things in which one must be right.

But allow me to remind you of what you wrote:

"It seems clear to this writer that many, who *years ago* fought valiantly *against* the ungodly doctrine of 'unity-in-diversity' long advanced by Leroy Garrett and Carl Ketcherside, are *now* saying basically the same thing which those two have been saying, in effect, for so long: since we *disagree* on *some* matters, then we can (with God's approval) *disagree* on *everything*, or at least *almost* everything. There is little or nothing about which we must be *right*. Therefore, we can have 'unity' no matter what any one believes and teaches. We can all bring our 'little tents' (of doctrinal error) in under the 'big tent' (of compromise) and announce to the world that we are *united* just as Christ would have us be. This is false doctrine."

I take it, my dear brother, that you do not read what I write, for I do not believe any of the things you charge me of, except unity-in-diversity, and any one who reads my journal with any consistency knows that this is the case. In fact I do not know of *any* Christian in any church that would say, "There is little or nothing about which we must be right." They would all agree with you as I do that "This is false doctrine."

As for unity-in-diversity your essay implies that there are *some* things upon which we might differ. That being the case then you too believe in unity despite differences, which is all that I mean by unity-in-diversity. The New Covenant Scriptures are replete with instances of (such as Peter and Paul) and instructions about unity in diversity (such as "Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind"), so I presume we both believe that brothers can differ and still be one in Christ. We therefore *both* believe in unity in diversity, so it may not be an "ungodly doctrine" after all. It would depend on what unity in diversity is made to mean. It certainly cannot be made to mean that "since we disagree on some matters, then we can disagree on everything, or at least almost everything," as you represent me as believing. It would be interesting to see how you would document that from my writings, as you usually choose to do as a Christian scholar.

Since we now agree on unity in diversity, as herein explained, I will say a word about the other charges you make. By the way, brother Warren, since we are both committed to the imperatives of the Bible don't you think we should be especially cautious as editors lest we judge each other unfairly?

1.Again and again in *Restoration Review* and in unity meetings I have advocated unity on the grounds of the seven ones of Eph. 4, following our

pioneers in this regard, who based their unity movement upon what Campbell liked to call "the seven principles." True, they sometimes reduced these to their essence and pled for unity on the grounds of "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." So I stand with Paul and with the Campbells on the seven unities as the basis of fellowship. Is this not far from "Therefore, we can have 'unity' no matter what one believes and teaches," as you charge Carl and me with advocating?

1. I have always insisted that no sister or brother can be asked to compromise any truth that she or he holds, including a "truth" that others may consider an opinion, such as a particular view on prophecy. Our churches, therefore, must be sufficiently tolerant as to accept *both* millennialists and antimillennialists. We can only ask that neither will impose his views upon others as a test of fellowship. Yes, one may compromise an opinion for the sake of unity (or keep the opinion to himself), but never what he holds as truth, and certainly not the great truths of the Christian faith. And yet in your essay you charge me with advocating a compromise with truth for the sake of unity.

3. As for the "big tent" under which we all gather with our "little tents" of doctrinal error and announce to the world that we are one, it is a cruel caricature of what I believe. I have long insisted that unity is not ours to create. It is a given of God, "the Spirit's unity," which we are to preserve with loving forbearance. There is no "big tent" under which we are to gather, for God has already given us that divine Tabernacle, not made with men's hands, which is infused with his Spirit. All who are in Christ (no one else) are in that Tabernacle, and it is the Spirit that fills that Tabernacle that makes us one — not unity forums, not councils, not popes, and not editors! So, in a very important sense we are already one and the church is already united. Unity is real if we are in Christ, but perhaps not fully realized. This is what Thomas Campbell meant when he wrote: "The Church of Christ upon earth is intentionally, essentially, and constitutionally one." His movement was not to restore that church or to make it one. It already existed and it was already one! It cannot be other than one, for Christ cannot be divided. It is a matter of our accepting each other as *in* Christ and thus *preserve* the unity of the Spirit, as the apostle instructs.

So much for what you had to say about Carl and me in context. You also imply that we do not believe that very interesting proposition that you often proclaim, as in the Flew debate: *Truth is both absolute and attainable.* While that is a philosophical thesis and not a biblical one, we will have to view it as an opinion, or perhaps as a deduction drawn from Scripture and reason. In any event we would not be able to make it an article of faith, even if it does appear in *Spiritual Sword.* It is not in Scripture! Nonetheless, I agree on this deducation, with some qualification.

To be sure, *truth* is absolute, but it is only *truth* that is absolute, not everything that you and I say is truth. What the Scriptures actually say, *explicitly*, is true, but what we say it means may not be. For example, "When that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away," is true, absolutely true, but my idea of what "that which is perfect" means may not be true. This is where we must allow for differences, not over what is *said* but over what we think it means.

As for truth being attainable, there are two qualifications, assuming that you mean that truth can be known. We can attain only that truth which God has vouchsafed to us. Dt. 29:29 says that the "revealed" things belong to us, while the "secret things" belong only to God. There are many truths among God's secrets that we will never know in this world, but still they are truths, and are unattainable, for now at least.

This is also the case with things in nature. I recently heard a scientist postulate the idea that there are thousands of inhabited planets in the far-flung universe. If this is true, then it is indeed an absolute truth, and always has been, since creation at least, whether we have attained unto it or not. Only in this generation have we discovered truths that have always been true.

Another qualification has to be that we are not likely to attain truth *absolutely*, maybe no truth at all. While Jesus is the ultimate truth, and while we profess to both love him and know him, who can say that his love is perfect or his knowledge absolute? Only God is omniscient. We "look through a glass darkly" and do not know and cannot know as we will in eternity.

So, I do not see that the thesis *Truth is absolute and attainable,* while generally true, is particularly helpful. But I nonetheless respect your fondness for it. But you could remove the redundancy, *Truth is attainable,* for truth by its very nature is absolute. *God is truth!* One does not have to say that God is absolute truth.

But we are basically agreed in this regard, for we can certainly attain (and continue to attain through study) those truths that God has revealed so that we can serve him faithfully in this world.

Now that you have a firsthand report of what I really believe and what I have all these years taught, by word and by pen, and witnessed to by thousands, it is in your hands as to whether you will correct these misrepresentations. You have spoken falsely concerning your brothers in Christ, men for whom Christ died. As for Carl Ketcherside, there are tens of thousands that have read him and heard him for many years who would laugh in your face at what you said about him. And it should not be too difficult for a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt to see that people who read and hear a man just might know more about what he believes than one who does not and will not either read him or hear him!

Well, so much for all this. I hope I have not bored you, no more at least than you bore me! And I hope the best for you in your ministry at the School of Preaching and through *The Spiritual Sword.* I am sure that you are a blessing to a lot of people.

I notice in the *Firm Foundation* that you are soon to be in Denton for a Spiritual Sword lectureship, with all the faithful ones in tow. I hope it all goes well. If you will drop by the house, we'll talk it over, with Ouida serving wine and/or coffee. If you are anti-wine, which is not very philosophical, or anti-coffee, which is more understandable, we'll settle for water. Unity in diversity!

Sincerely,

Leroy Garrett

P.S. I have mixed motives in writing this. Besides wanting to inform you of these things, I will also use it in *Restoration Review*, to which I presume you will have no objection. I have been ill somewhat this year and need all the writing time I can manage.

Highlights in Restoration History . . .

"IN MATTERS CIRCUMSTANTIAL, LIBERTY"

Sometime back the Disciples of Christ Historical Society asked me to do an essay for them on the redoubtable W. T. Moore, who was born 150 years ago this year. Due to illnesses that have slowed my pace this year I am tardy in getting this done. But I found some time last week to spend with this dear old brother, in the new TCU library in Fort Worth. He was the kind of guy who could write a poem on his 92nd birthday. Like the pyramids, he appeared to defy time. In 1868, when he was 36, he published *The Living Pulpit of the Christian Church*, which is a rich source of study of our earliest pioneers. Fifty years later he issued *The New Living Pulpit of the Christian Church*, an equally resourceful volume of subsequent generations of our pioneers.

"Dr. Moore," as he was usually called, was really something else. Still on the firing line in his 80's and 90's, serving in combat during years of change for our Movement, he was sometimes dismissed as aged and senile. He would fire back at his younger challengers with, "Why not discuss the issues? Suppose I criticized you for being young and inexperienced?"

Well, this is not really an essay on W. T. Moore, except for one or two goodies that I will share with you. I may write of him at length at another time. In fact I am tempted to write his biography, which apparently was never done, even though data was called for brotherhood-wide. His son intended to do his father's life story, but perhaps by the time the father died the son was too old!

Dr. Moore, who was among our first "liberals" (for such things as calling for a *delegate* convention and the support of societies) had a way with epigrams and slogans. He revised old ones and created new ones. He created one that he believed expressed the essence of the Movement's plea: *We are free to differ but not to divide*, which is one of my favorite slogans emanating from our heritage. It is really on target in terms of what the Scriptures teach about unity in diversity. This is Paul's message to Corinth: *you can differ but you can't have parties.* And it is the essence of Rom. 14: *you can believe different ways about some things but you can't divide.* And it summarizes what our pioneers believed and practiced, at least in the first two generations. Even Stone and Campbell disagreed, sometimes rather substantially, but they could not and would not divide.

We are free to differ but not to divide! It is an appropriate one-liner for a movement that was launched for the purpose of uniting the Christians in all the sects. And for a long time in our history this view obtained. Even slavery was treated as an opinion, so folk differed, not only in North and South but within congregations, but they did not divide. One of my favorite scenes in our history is that of a northern general in a southern pulpit with Confederate soldiers in the audience. They preached Christ and kept "politics" out of the pulpit.

In more recent history we have revised that slogan to read: *We are free to divide but not to differ.* Like other carnal believers who have multiplied parties, we solve our difficulties by dividing and starting "a loyal church" consisting of "faithful brethren." The crusty old J. D. Tant used to say, "We have 16 different kinds of loyal Churches of Christ in Texas." We have allowed Satan to sell us a bill of goods: he assures us that we *are* free to divide — for the sake of "a faithful church" of course.

The old bromide in all this is that *we can't fellowship error.* That may well be true, but we *are* to fellowship those who are in error. Otherwise there would be no one to fellowship! Witness the churches in the New Testament. Witness Peter and Paul. Witness your own church. There is no perfect church and there is no Christian that is wholly without error. In fact we are plainly urged to receive those who are in error: "Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7). What was your condition when Christ received you? What a beautiful metaphor: *as* Christ received us, that is how we are to accept each other, warts and all.

Dr. Moore revised an old slogan, one that went back to the Lutheran reformation and first appeared as "In fundamentals, unity; in non-fundamentals, liberty; in all things, charity." It also appeared as "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." In our history it has usually appeared as "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, love."

But the doctor had it read in a way that best expressed the spirit of our plea, as he understood it: *In matters of faith, unity; in matters circumstantial, liberty; in all things, love.*

There is wisdom in recognizing that most of the things we have allowed to disturb us have come about circumstantially, due mainly to the circumstance of time, place, the unforeseen, and personality. Circumstances have greatly affected the shape of all our churches, far more than we realize, and we have been rather selective in the changes we have resisted. Take the circumstance of wealth in this country, an unforeseen development in the light of the history of nations. Wealth, not the mandates of Scripture, has given us elaborate edifices, expensive appointments, and well-paid staffs. Only a few, such as the Amish and Quakers, have resisted the effects of this circumstance. They have remained simple and rude despite wealth.

There is the circumstance of denominational growth and maturity. So long as we were a rude, pioneer, frontier people, along with being youthful as a church, there was little need for structures and agencies, whether seminaries, benevolent and missionary societies, pension funds, or publication houses. We could take pride in our simplicity while casting aspersions on those much older than ourselves for their "man-made inventions." The real reason we did not have the inventions is that the circumstances were different for us. It was an easy matter to poke fun at stained-glass windows when all we had were clapboard houses with no glass windows at all.

Circumstances have affected today's Churches of Christ in an interesting way, and we are barely a century old. We now have two rather excellent seminaries, made "necessary" by our denominational maturation, though we cannot yet call them that. A half-century ago such would have been impossible, whatever we called them. Societies and agencies are still off limits, but there are those "things" that perform these functions, more or less, whether they be *ad hoc* organizations, lectureships, insurance programs, or one-man or few-men educational, benevolent, and missionary enterprises.

We have some rather effective "agencies" or "societies" in the work of single congregations, who solicit cooperation from many other churches, such as Hearld of Truth radio-TV enterprise, which involves thousands of churches. Other congregations translate and distribute the Scriptures, do

benevolent work in such places as Poland, and have special educational projects. If we were better organized as a church we could do these things with less duplication and more effectively, but this will come in time, as circumstances dictate.

The circumstance of social progress gave the frontier churches choirs and instrumental music, and most of them went along, even most of our own people. Those of us who did not must realize that the change that came was cultural and circumstantial and was not really a biblical issue. Some of us who are now Churches of Christ joined the Amish in resisting this circumstantial change, but we did not go nearly as far as they did in resisting most or all the changes brought on by a maturing society. After all, the Churches of Christ today are as modern as any denomination, with or without instrumental music. If one doubts this, let him visit some of our more recent edifices, such as the Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock, Tx., which has all the marks of a Hyatt-Regency, including the glass elevator!

But, you see, it does not take instrumental music to be modern, even materialistic. If it did, being acappella would be more of a problem than it is. When it comes to spending money on ourselves rather than the needy, we may well be the chiefest of sinners among all the denominations.

But Dr. Moore gives us a more understandable answer to these things in his revision of an old slogan, *In matters circumstantial, liberty.* Circumstances have made us different. It is because of certain old leaders, dead and gone, that some churches use one cup for communion or are "bread breakers." The very thought of change brings horror. "What would dear old brother So and So think . . ." is a common defense. Circumstances of personnel has had its effect.

Very well, says Dr. Moore. We will all accept one another in love just the same, recognizing that circumstances have brought us to different places. But we are all in Christ nonetheless, *In matters of faith, unity* being the watchword, and be hanged with circumstances, and opinions too for that matter. — *the Editor*

BOOK NOTES

It says someting about our way of life that an estimated 20 million Americans have anxiety attacks. Then there are nervous anxiety, rage, paranoid thoughts, phobias, obsessions, alcoholism, and still more. There is a highly recommended book on how to deal in a practical way with all such problems. One psychiatrist touts it as a "do-it-yourself" manual for managing anxiety. *Get Rid of Anxiety and Stress* by Toby Drews is hot off the press and we will send you a copy for 5.50 postpaid.

The two-volume set of Richardson's *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* will always be a veritable gold mine of information on our heritage, written by a nearly-blind, beloved physician on his favorite, lifetime subject. We can be thankful that it is still in print. 21.95 postpaid.

The *Christian Herald* hails *The New Westminister Dictionary of the Bible* as "a goldmine of information about every major topic in the Bible." It is scholarly and well-illustrated. We recommend it highly. 18.95 pp.

We will send you a pack of C. S. Lewis, all four books for 13.00 or 3.50 each, and they are Lewis at his best: *The Screwtape Letters, Mere Christianity, Miracles,* and *The Problem of Pain.* If you have not read Lewis, you should, and here is the place to start. If you are a Lewis reader and want a book *about* him, his life and his thought, we have *C. S. Lewis: Mere Christian* by Kathryn Lindskoog at 6.95 pp.

We will also send you a pack of Francis Schaeffer's older books to those who have not yet read him. *The God Who is There* (5.50); *Death in the City* (4.50); and *The Church at the End of the 20th Centery* (4.75) are the title that made him famous; all three for 13.00; prices include postage.

Since John R. W. Stott is highly appreciated by many of our readers, we also offer a pack of his books: *Basic Christianity* (3.50); *Men Made New,* and exposition of Rom. 5-8 (3.50); *What Christ Thinks of the Church* (4.50); *Your Mind Matters* (1.95); *Guard the Gospel,* on 2 Tim. (3.95); *Christ the Controversalist* (4.50). All six books for 19.00 postpaid.

Know Why You Believe by Paul Little will strenghten your faith and provide answers to such questions as to why God allows suffering, science and Scripture, miracles, reason and revelation. 2.95 pp.

Our own publication is selling unusually well during its first year, and we encourage you to order your copy of *The Stone-Campbell Movement* by Leory Garrett at 21.95 postpaid. We are now working on a companion volume, *Documents of the Stone-Campbell Movement.* More will be said about this work. You should start your study of our heritage with the first volume.

We also have bound volumes of this publication, neatly done with dustjackets and tables of content. *Principles of Unity and Fellowship* (1977) and *The Ancient Order* (1978) are 5.50 each, while the double volume for 1979-80, *Blessed are the Peacemakers* and *With All the Mind* is 8.50, postpaid.

Please send a check with your order since we do not have the time to keep books. Since the prices include postage the amount is easy to figure. We thank you for your patronage.

READERS' EXCHANGE

We do enjoy this little paper. We are Christians that use the instrument in worship as well as many other no-no's, such as Sunday School helps, but we really are just "Christians only" who worship with the family wherever we are. — *Pearl Wilson, Mineral, Wa.*

Even though all my life has been spent in the church, I feel I am just now beginning to understand the gospel of grace. For the first time in my life I can say without reservation that truly, truly, this is good news which everyone should hear! For someone who always struggled under the impression that we are saved through perfect belief manifesting itself in perfect obedience, Eph. 2:8-9, read in all its simplicity, has become a fountain of hope. I can hardly sleep at night for thinking about it! It certainly is a joy to be a child of Abraham after being a son of Moses for so long. — *Christopher A. Davis, Union Seminary, Richmond, Va.*

I disagree with you when you say that the church is the community, for the community is the community. The church is the church, which means that the party is the party. We do not have to be stuck with "church," as you say, any more than we have to be stuck with "Easter." Part of my individual reformation movement is to restore the Spirit's vocabulary. — *Buff Scott, Jr., Cherokee, Io.*

We have settled at a place which is an exciting blend of old and new in an unlikely setting. The Norwood Church of Christ has elders who have educated themselves with theological insight which I had to go to seminary to attain and who struggle creatively with the synoptic problem and the issue of women's place in the church. I'm sure many in the area are aghast, but it is a pleasant and refreshing surprise and a very hopeful omen to me. It is not a "renewal" church or a "Charismatic" church, but an old Church of Christ which has allowed questions to arise and be asked, and has taken seriously the attempt to deal with them. — *Clark Goslee, Cincinnati, Oh.*

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